



Ninth Coast Guard District
Public Affairs/Detroit Spill J.I.C.
P.O.C.: PAC Adam Wine
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Phone: (313) 568-9486
Fax: (313) 568-9581
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Oil spill battle continues

More than 90 people from 7 agencies are cooperating in the response efforts

DETROIT – More than 90 emergency responders from a range of local, state and national agencies are working together to contain the spill, clean it up, and track down the source or sources of the spilled oil. Estimates are that between 1,000 and 5,000 gallons of oil were discharged into the water, taking in 17 miles of shoreline along both the American and Canadian mainland, and around Grosse Ile.

The workers and agencies involved include:

- 40 workers from clean-up contractor Marine Pollution Control
- 3 officials from Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
- 4 people from Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- 2 scientists with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- 12 officials with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- 6 hazardous material responders from the U.S. Coast Guard National Strike Force-Atlantic
- 36 U.S. Coast Guard personnel from local, regional, and district offices around the Great Lakes
- 2 investigators with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service-assessing impact on shorebirds

Seeking a source

Coast Guard and Environmental Protection Agency representatives are examining oil samples to map the oil's 'fingerprint' and to help pinpoint possible sources. No single source of the spilled oil has been identified; it appears to be an industrial-grade oil, and is 'weathered,' or used.

Polluting the environment is a crime. Civil and criminal penalties may apply if a responsible party is found. U.S. law caps civil penalties at \$27,500 per violation per day. In addition, responsible parties are required to pay the entire cost of the clean-up, which is expected to tally well over \$100,000.

Impact on shore life

Investigators from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are on-scene to assess the oil's impact on wildlife, especially geese and ducks. Citizens are asked to avoid all contact with the oil; wildlife recovery specialists will collect struggling waterfowl and other wildlife over the next few days.

Citizens should avoid boating in the Detroit River anywhere south of the River Rouge.

For more information, contact the Joint Information Center at (313) 568-9486.